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PRICE, 35 CENTS

Too Many Wives

By

Sara Henderson

MARCH BROTHERS, Publishers

208, 210, 212 Wright Avenue

LEBANON, OHIO

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Too Many Wives

A DOMESTIC COMEDY

BY

SARA HENDERSON

MARCH BROTHERS, *Publishers*
208, 210, 212 Wright Avenue, LEBANON, OHIO

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Too Many Wives

CHARACTERS

JACK STANFORD—The young husband.

"HONEY BEA"—Jack's wife.

FRANK DALTON—Jack's old college chum.

WILL THOMSON—Honey Bea's cousin.

JOHN STANFORD—Jack's uncle from Indiana.

BRIDGET—The Stanford's cook.

COSTUMES

FRANK DALTON—first costume, modern; second; fanciful negligee; boudoir cap.

WILL THOMSON—first costume, modern; second, ballet costume.

BRIDGET—first costume, maid's; second, Irish comedy costume.

OTHERS—modern.

PROPERTIES

[*Two suitcases. Two photographs. Purses. Magazines. Letter. Cigars.*]

SCENE

[Living-room in the Stanford home. Door Center, back, leads upstairs; door Down R. leads outdoors; door Up R. leads into dining-room; door Up L. leads to library. Table Down Center holds telephone, magazines and books. Chairs to right and left of table. Other furniture may be arranged in any way to make the stage look attractive and homelike.]

[Discovered: Honey Bea humming snatches of a song, and arranging a few flowers for the table.]

HONEY BEA [calling]: Bridget! O, Bridget!

BRIDGET [entering Door Up R.]: Yis. [Telephone rings as Bridget enters room.]

HONEY BEA: Just one moment, Bridget. [Answers phone] Hello, hello.....Yes, this is I. Do I know what day this is? As if I could forget! —What?— You're coming home? Good! When?.....Oh, how lovely! [To Bridget.] Bridget, Mr. Stanford is coming home for lunch. Hurry and cream some canned chicken, make a banana salad, and.....oh dear! what can we have for desert?

BRIDGET: I've made some sthrawb'ry jillo wid some spanked cream on ut f'r his dinner t'night.

HONEY BEA: All right. We'll use that, and you can prepare something else for his dinner. Do you know what day this is, Bridget?

BRIDGET: Faith an' I'd have to be deaf in both ears of me av I didn't. Ut's y'r first anniversary, an' ye're goin' t' git twinty thousan' dollars from Misther Jack's rich owld Uncle, because ye've had no quarrel.

HONEY BEA: Oh, some one has told you.

BRIDGET: Yis. Yersilf 'ave towld me ev'ry day f'r the pasht year. Yer husban' he 'ave towld me,— an' yer cousin, Mishter Will, he 'ave towld me, an' Miss Ann, she 'ave—

HONEY BEA [*laughing*]: Never mind, Bridget. I see some one has told you.

BRIDGET: An' Mishter Jack, bliss his swate sowl, have promised to give me a prisint whin he do git the money.

HONEY BEA [*with enthusiasm*]: I'll give you one, too, Bridget.

[*Noise is heard outside Door Down R.*]

Goodness! There is Mr. Stanford now. Hurry, Bridget.

[*Exit Bridget Door Up R.*]

[*Enter Mr. Stanford.*]

STANFORD [*kissing her*]: Hello, Honey Bea. [*Removes hat and coat.*] I had to come as far as mother's, on an errand, and I couldn't be that near, and not come on home; especially on this day.

HONEY BEA: It's a wonderful anniversary, isn't it? Think how lovely it is going to be to have all that money!

STANFORD: I begin to feel like a capitalist already. Listen! [*Takes letter from pocket and reads*] "and if your first anniversary leaves you as happy as your wedding day found you, wire me, and the money is yours."

HONEY BEA [*laughing*]: Dear old thing! He has put that sentence at the bottom of every letter he has written us.

STANFORD [*folding letter and replacing it in pocket*]: I knew there was no need to wait until tonight, so I sent the telegrain this morning. You are as happy, aren't you, Honey Bea?

HONEY BEA: Happier! Then, I wondered if you could possibly be as nice as I had dreamed you were; now, I know you are nicer!

STANFORD: Queer, isn't it? That is exactly what I wired Uncle about you.

HONEY BEA: You know, dear, I think one reason we haven't quarrelled is because we have never formed the habit of telling fibs to each other. Do you remember the day we promised always to tell the truth?

STANFORD [*laughing*]: Indeed I do! It was the farewell knell to my wonderful reputation as a fisherman and my prowess as a hunter. That was a sad parting; but it has paid. Your quixotic love of the truth has completely changed Uncle. He used to be an unreasonable woman-hater; now, he is anything but that, and he thinks you are wonderful. By the way, Honey Bea, he sent you a photo of himself. It's there in my right-hand coat pocket.

HONEY BEA [*going after photo*]: How sweet of him! Your uncle is a dear. I wish he would come to visit us.

STANFORD: Why, he said in his letter that he is coming, soon.

HONEY BEA [*looking at photograph*]: He's such a nice looking old man. I shall like him whether we get the twenty thousand or not.

STANFORD: Fine old chap. Been like a father to me,—but, I'll have to confess that twenty thousand dollars would increase my affection for almost any one.

HONEY BEA: There's really no danger of our not getting it, is there?

STANFORD: Not a chance.

HONEY BEA [*discovering she has two photos*]: Why, Jack, there are two photos here. Who is this other?

STANFORD: That? That's my old college chum, Frank Dalton. You remember I wanted him for our best man, but he hadn't come back from France. He's a good old scout; you're sure to like him.

HONEY BEA [*coldly*]: Perhaps. But this doesn't happen to be a "he"; it's a "she".

STANFORD: No, it isn't. It's Frank Dalton dressed as a girl. Makes a peachy looking girl, doesn't he?

HONEY BEA: Entirely too peachy for me to believe she is a man.

STANFORD: Well, she is.

HONEY BEA: She?

STANFORD: Oh, well, you know what I mean.

HONEY BEA [*slowly*]: Yes.—I—think—I—do.

STANFORD: Don't be foolish, Honey Bea.

HONEY BEA: Of course not: Who is this girl?

STANFORD: Frank Dalton.

HONEY BEA [*sarcastically*]: Don't you suppose I know the picture of a girl when I see it?

STANFORD: Good heavens! Honey Bea, you know I would not lie to you.

HONEY BEA: I had thought you wouldn't, but—can you explain this picture?

STANFORD: Very easily. I had a letter from Frank Dalton yesterday, asking me if I had one of these old girl-photographs of his, and to be sure to send it to him if I had. That was my errand to mother's this morning. That is how I happen to have the pleasure of lunching with you today. Is that clear?

HONEY BEA: Too clear! You invent quickly for one out of practice. I—wonder—if—you—are—out—of—practice?

STANFORD: Why, Honey Bea! Listen, dear—

HONEY BEA [*interrupting*]: Don't "Honey Bea" and "dear" me until you can explain why you are carrying the photograph of a strange woman in your pocket.

STANFORD [*almost beside himself*]: This is absurd! We can't quarrel over Frank Dalton's photograph. Look here, Honey Bea, you've simply got to understand. [*Attempts to take her in his arms.*]

HONEY BEA [*jerking away*]: Don't touch me, Jack Stanford! Here you've sworn you loved only me, and—and—[*tearfully*] you've been carrying another woman's picture all this time. Oh! Oh! [*tears photograph to pieces and stamps on it*]. I just wish I could do her as I am doing this.

STANFORD: If you would only—

HONEY BEA [*interrupting*]: But I won't! [*getting her hat and coat*]. I am going over to your mother's now, but I shall take the very first train for home. And I am going to stay forever and ever and ever and ever—[*exit tearfully, while saying "ever and ever and ever"*].

STANFORD [*following and calling*]: Bea! Bea! Honey Bea! [*Turns dejectedly, goes to chair left of table, and leans his head on his hands.*] Oh, it's no use! Our first anniversary—and—our first quarrel. [*Sighs deeply.*] I suppose I shall have to wire Uncle about it. [*Ring is heard at door Down R.*] Who's that, I wonder. [*Goes to door; returns with telegram in*

hand; opens it and reads] "On my way East. Stop off with you for couple days. Arrive this afternoon at five." Good heavens! What a muddle! If he comes and finds Bea gone, he will think I have been lying to him all the year for the sake of that twenty thousand.

BRIDGET [*entering*]: Mishther Jack, yer loonch is riddy, but—[*looking around*] where's the mistress?

STANFORD [*embarrassedly*]: Bridget, your mistress got angry with me,—and—left.

BRIDGET: Lift? But then, ye nade nivir tell th' uncle about ut. Ut's no more nor a love-sphat. Shure an' ut's often I've carried a black eye f'r a wake wid Pat's carisses.

STANFORD: I've just had a telegram from my uncle that he will be here this afternoon.

BRIDGET: This afthernoon? What does the owld fool want to come today for?

STANFORD [*smiling slightly*]: You'll have to ask him.

BRIDGET [*crossly,—with arms akimbo*]: Bedad, ut do look loike the two av yez c'd have chose a betther toime than this. Thot's two prisints I have lost!

STANFORD: I'm sorry, Bridget. It means quite a loss to me, you know.

BRIDGET [*sudden inspiration*]: Bedad, Mishther Jack, ye've always been a good masther to me, an' I'll not be lettin' ye lose twinty thousand' dollars just f'r the lack of a plisint wife. We'll till the owld gintleman thot I am your wife.

STANFORD [*trying to conceal a smile*]: Thank you, Bridget; that's kind of you. But I am not going to lie about it. If I lose the money, I'll have to lose it, that's all.

BRIDGET: Shure an' it's mesilf thot always tills the truth whin ut's nicissary. But a lie at a time loike this ain't no lie,—ut's no more than a little hilp in the time of trouble. You'd betther ate yer loonch, Misther Jack; mayhap yer morals won't be so troublesome on a full stomach.

STANFORD: I'm not very hungry. I think I'll not try to eat. [*Ring is heard at door Down R. Bridget starts to answer, but Stanford interferes.*] Never mind, I'll attend to it. [*Goes to door. Enter Dalton.*]

DALTON [*with enthusiasm*]: Hello—Jacky.

STANFORD [*surprised*]: Why,—why, hello—Dalton—[*Shakes hands*]. More than glad to see you, old man, but how do you happen to be in this part of the country? I just got your letter yesterday.

DALTON: I know. The man in charge of this district was called away, and I am to substitute until we can get another to take his place.

STANFORD: Why didn't you wire you were coming?

DALTON: Wanted to surprise you and your "Honey Bea" that you rave so much about. I've always been keen to know just what you drew in the matrimonial lottery. [*Stanford suddenly registers gloom.*] I say, you look worried. What's wrong?

STANFORD: Everything.

DALTON [*laughing*]: Honey Bea been stinging?

STANFORD: No, but women are so darned unreasonable!

DALTON [*laughing*]: Sure they are! That's why they marry us,—and Jacky, old boy, that's why we marry them. Where can you find a bigger bore than an absolutely reasonable woman?

STANFORD [*crossly*]: I don't know. I never saw one.

DALTON: You're more fortunate than you realize. Now if you will enlighten me, perhaps I may be able to help you. What's the trouble?

STANFORD [*gloomily*]: Well, this is our first anniversary,— and we celebrated it by having our first quarrel.

DALTON [*facetiously*]: Your first quarrel? Gee, but you're lucky! How did you manage to stall it off for so long?

STANFORD [*frowning*]: Oh, well, if you're going to jest—

DALTON [*interrupting*]: Seriously, Jack, you aren't doing all this worrying about a trifle like that?

STANFORD: Trifle? Wait until you know what you're talking about. Uncle John was to put twenty thousand dollars in my name if this day left us as happy as our wedding day found us. I wired him this morning before we quarrelled,—but I suppose I can correct that just as soon as—

DALTON [*interrupting*]: The deuce you can!

STANFORD: I'll have to; I can't lie about it because—

DALTON [*interrupting and scanning him closely as if discovering a new species*]: I say! What do you think you are? A reincarnation of George Washington?

STANFORD: No, but I promised to stick absolutely to the truth; besides—

DALTON [*interrupting*]: It was the truth when you wired,—and now, keeping your mouth closed is not a lie; it's mere business sagacity.

STANFORD: You're worse than a woman, Dalton. You can't let me finish one sentence without butting in all the time. What I have been trying to tell you is this: Bea has gone,—gone forever,—and I have just received a telegram from Uncle, stating he will arrive this afternoon at five.

DALTON [*whistling*]: Whew! That's different. But the thing to do is to phone your wife. She'll come back at once when she understands.

STANFORD [*sarcastically*]: Any one would know you are a bachelor, Dalton. A bachelor is the only man on earth who knows exactly how to manage a wife.

DALTON: I don't have to be married, Jack, to know that nine wives out of ten do the very thing the husband is sure she won't do. Try it, anyway.

STANFORD [*taking down receiver*]: I'll do it, but it won't do any good. Hello Central. Give me Main 2084. That you, Mother?—I'd like to speak with Bea—She isn't? Why, she said she was going there—Oh, I see. Which cousin is it,—Bert?—Is that so? What is it this time, a Cadillac?—They didn't say where they were going, did they?—No-o, nothing wrong; I just wanted to ask her about something. Good bye, Mother. [*Hangs up receiver.*] Bea's cousin Bert drove over in his new Cadillac. He is from her home. He was in love with her when I first met her. She has probably gone back home. I don't care so much about the money, but I hate this quarrel with Honey Bea.

DALTON: I see the twenty thousand skidding, my boy. It's too bad. What did you two turtle-doves quarrel about, anyway?

STANFORD: If you'll pick up those darned scraps on the floor, you'll find out. [Dalton picks up scraps; looks at them in surprise.] She knows you're a woman.

DALTON: By Jove! Did my beautiful face cause all this trouble? I'm flattered! If you could only get in touch with her, you could so easily explain, now that I'm here.

STANFORD: Yes,—if. But I am sure she has gone.

DALTON [*sudden inspiration*]: I've got it! I am the unwitting cause of all this tempest in the matrimonial sea,—and if you will kindly scrap that new-found conscience of yours, I'll accept the responsibility of piloting you through to the port of Love and Money.

STANFORD: How?

DALTON: I'll doll up in your wife's clothes, and we'll fool Uncle John.

STANFORD: I told you once, Dalton, that I would not lie in order to get the money.

DALTON [*impatiently*]: Dash it all, man, that's not a lie. If your Honey Bea knew the truth, there would be no quarrel. And think how she will feel when she learns that her stupidity has caused you to lose the money. She'll never forgive you for not making it straight in some way. That's the way of a woman. She gets a man in all sorts of tight places with the sublimest faith in his ability to extricate both himself and her, if necessary.

STANFORD: I believe you are right. We can explain it all to Uncle when Bea gets back. Go upstairs, first room to the right, and put on anything you can find. The old chap is rather clever, so be sure you don't talk too much, and give the thing away.

DALTON: You say he is clever? [Stanford nods.] Then remember it's a woman I'm impersonating.

STANFORD [*smiling*]: I get you. But talk as little as you reasonably can. I'll go up with you and help you dress. [Exit door Center Back.]

BRIDGET [*entering, talking to herself*]: Shure, the young idgits! To give up twinty thousand fer a bit av bad timper, an' he nivir to bate her wanst! An' there's both av me prisints gone. Bedad, I know what I'll do. I'll run over to Nora Moriarity's, borry her new grane silk driss, an' I'll pretind I am the misthress. Misther Jack 'll nivir dare to give it away, onct I have started it. I'll slip out the back dure. [Exit door Up R. As soon as she is off stage, doorbell of door Down R. rings violently. Stanford enters from Door Center Back.]

STANFORD [*calling*]: Bridget! Bridget! Where in the world is she? [Opens door Down R. Enter Will.] Hello Billy, come in. I thought you were in college.

WILL: I am. Our frat is going to put on a swagger show next week and I came home to borrow, steal or buy some feminine toggery. Make some swell chorus girl, won't I?

STANFORD: A scream.

WILL: I just dropped in to congratulate you. This is the day you get your twenty thousand, isn't it.

STANFORD: It was, but—

WILL [*interrupting*]: But what? Nothing has happened, I hope. I've already borrowed money on the strength of you and Cousin Bea coming into that twenty.

STANFORD: Honey Bea and I had a slight misunderstanding,—and she has left me.

WILL: Left you? Honey Bea left you?

STANFORD: She has.

WILL [*consolingly*]: Oh well, never mind. She'll fly back all right. Just give her time.

STANFORD: Time is the trouble. I've just had a telegram from Uncle that he will arrive at five this afternoon.

WILL: This afternoon? Well, it's fortunate that Honey Bea hasn't gone very far. I saw her about fifteen minutes ago, down town.

STANFORD [*grasping his hand*]: You did? Where?

WILL: At Drake's department store. Honey Bea didn't see me. I was several aisles over from her, and by the time the clerk had given me my change, she had gone. She probably went to the second floor; you'd better hurry on down there and get her.

STANFORD: I shall. Make yourself at home, Billy, I'll be right back. I simply have to find her, you know.

WILL: I'll say you do! Good luck to you. [Stanford exits door Down R. putting on coat as he goes.] Just like a fool girl to flare up at the wrong time. I wonder what they quarrelled about. I bet Jack has been telling her the truth about something. I've just been waiting to see this truth-fest of theirs lead into some sort of trouble. Truth, the naked Goddess who lives in the bottom of a well! And old Jack hasn't learned yet that when she comes to the surface she needs a bit of drapery, especially if she is to be introduced to ladies. The trouble with Jack is that he doesn't know how to distinguish between telling a lie—and merely draping a shivering goddess. [Sudden inspiration.] By George, I know what I'll do! I'll dress up in my chorus-girl costume and pretend that

I am Jack's wife. [Exit door Up Left, taking suit case.] [Enter Dalton garbed in fanciful negligee and boudoir cap; swishes negligee about his feet.]

DALTON: My word! I'm glad I don't have to wear skirts. [Looking at clock.] Three o'clock. Two hours yet to wait. What did I do with my cigars? [Feels down front of dress.] I don't see how the poor things get along without pockets. [Pulls up skirt and takes bill-book from his garter.] Here's my bill-book, but what did I do with my cigars? [Sudden thought.] Oh, yes, I remember—[Takes them from under his boudoir cap; starts to light one as doorbell Down R. rings. Hastily replaces cigars under cap, and goes to door.] [Speaking in a high treble.] Ah! This must be dear Uncle John. Come right in.

UNCLE JOHN [entering]: It is.

DALTON [gushing]: We're so delighted to have you, dear Uncle, but we were not expecting you until five.

UNCLE JOHN [laughing]: Yes, yes. I wanted to surprise you.

DALTON [wry face]: You have! But my dear Uncle, Jack has told me so much about you, I feel I already know you. [Clasps hands and looks romantic.] Jack is such a wonderful husband! I knew from the first we would get the twenty thousand. He is adorable! We never quarrel.

UNCLE JOHN [removing coat]: Ah, my dear! No wonder the young rascal does not quarrel with such a charming young wife. Come here and kiss your old uncle. [Dalton submits, making a wry face. Enter Stanford.]

STANFORD [aside]: Darn!

DALTON [noticing Stanford]: Jack, dear, here's Uncle.

STANFORD [*rushing forward*]: Well, Uncle, this is a great pleasure, I am sure. Honey Bea and I have been wishing you would make us a visit.

DALTON [*gushingly*]: Indeed we have! I've always wanted you to know how perfectly devoted dear Jack is to me. [Looks languishingly at Stanford.]

STANFORD: Just sit down and make yourself at home, Uncle, while Dalt....er....Honey Bea and I run up and arrange your room. [Takes up suitcase in one hand, and puts other arm around Dalton; exeunt center door Back. Dalton kicks at Stanford as they pass through doorway.]

UNCLE JOHN [*gazing after them a second, then chuckling and rubbing his hands delightedly*]: Shy little thing! They are as happy as two bugs in a rug. And such a lover of truth! She has completely reformed him. Well, well, I may make it twenty-five thousand. Jack is a good boy. [Enter Bridget.]

BRIDGET: Bedad! It's yoursilf thot's here already, is ut?

UNCLE JOHN [*astonished. Gazing at her through his spectacles*]: It is. And may I ask, my good woman, who you are?

BRIDGET: Who? Me? I am Jack's wife.

UNCLE JOHN: His what?

BRIDGET [*shouting*]: Yez must be deef. His wife, —w-i-f-e—wife.

UNCLE JOHN: I see. Just how many of you are there, anyway?

BRIDGET: Bedad, darlint, where did ye git ut?

UNCLE JOHN [*stiffly*]: Get what, Madam?

BRIDGET: Whatever ut is thot's makin' ye see double. Sure an' I 'aven't had a decent mince pie since th' eighteenth amendment wint in. Where's Misther,—I mane where's Jack?

UNCLE JOHN: He is upstairs with his other—with the baggage, you know.

BRIDGET: Bliss the heart av him! An' 'tis yer-silf thot's a good owld soul to be givin' us twenty thousand' dollars. Shure an' Jack have been the foine husban' to me. He ain't nivir blacked me eye wanst, an' this tooth I losht was by one of me other husban's.

UNCLE JOHN [*shocked*]: Your other husbands! Pray, Madam, how many have you had?

BRIDGET: I've losht count by now. But they're all dead, God rist their souls, exceptin' Jack, the dar-lint. [*Makes sign of the cross.*] Yez c'n till him thot I have wint to the kitchen to cook the dinner. [*Exit door Up R.*]

UNCLE JOHN [*looking after her*]: Bless my soul! The poor creature must be insane. Odd she should be under the impression that she is my nephew's wife. [*Begins to read paper. Enter Honey Bea door Down R.; does not observe Uncle John.*]

HONEY BEA [*Head down; talking to herself*]: I forgot my pocketbook. [*Discovers Uncle John.*] Goodness gracious! That looks like Jack's Uncle John. [*Approaches him.*] I beg your pardon, but is this Mr. John Stanford of Indiana?

UNCLE JOHN: It is. [*Aside.*] I'll bet she says she is Jack's wife. [*To her.*] And who are you, Miss?

HONEY BEA: Why, I am Jack's wife.

UNCLE JOHN [*aside*]: I thought so! [Scrutinizing her through his spectacles.] His wife, eh? You say you are his wife?

HONEY BEA: Yes, but we will not get your twenty thousand.

UNCLE JOHN [*surprised*]: Eh? What's that? Not get the twenty thousand. Why, bless my soul, this is something new!

HONEY BEA [*emphatically*]: I wouldn't live with him for one hundred and twenty thousand! [Sobbing.] He carries other women's pictures in his pockets!

UNCLE JOHN [*confused*]: Dear me! Bless my soul! This is surprising. My nephew must be a very wicked young man, and I thought him so truthful! I have been deceived.

HONEY BEA [*sobbing*]: So have I, Uncle. I still love him, but I never want to see him again. [Noise is heard door Up Left.] S-h-hh! Let me get my purse. [Takes purse from table drawer.] I wouldn't have Jack know I came back, for anything. Please don't tell him. [Exit hurriedly door Down R.]

UNCLE JOHN: Well, well, well! What next? I think Jack must have embraced the Mormon religion. Three! Bless my soul, the young beggar needs a million instead of twenty thousand! Nevertheless, I think I shall leave my money to a home for stray cats. [Enter Will clad in ballet costume, door Up Left.]

WILL [*dancing, arms outstretched, toward Uncle John*]: Ooo—la—la, Nunkey!

UNCLE JOHN [*adjusting his glasses in horrified surprise*]: Bless my soul, now, who are you?

WILL [*airily*]: Who? Me? Why, I am Jack's baby girl! Hasn't he written you about his little Honey Bea?

UNCLE JOHN [*severely*]: He wrote me about one, but I didn't know he had a hive of 'em.

WILL: Wrong, Nunk. There's only one bee in this hive, and I am it. [*Looks the old gentleman over.*] I say old dear, you are some sport!

UNCLE JOHN [*severely*]: Young woman, I do not approve of slang.

WILL [*confidently*]: Neither do I, but your modest and truthful young nephew is so bloomin' slow that he does not allow me to use anything stronger than slang. I hope you will be able to speed him up. Twenty thousand ought to help some, eh, old thing?

UNCLE JOHN: I must not have heard you correctly. Surely there is a mistake somewhere. Who did I understand you to say you are?

WILL: Jack's honey-lovey-dovey, angel-from abovey, but listen, sweet thing; [*Chucks the scandalized old man under the chin.*] If I had seen you first, I should never have married Jack!

UNCLE JOHN [*drawing away indignantly*]: Young woman, you are the fourth lovey-dovey I have met here today, but you're the first to coo at me. I shall leave at once.

WILL: Leave? I should say not! Come on, lovely one, and let me show you the latest 'dance. [*Grabs the old gentleman and whirls him noisily across the stage attempting to make him dance. After many puffs and pants, Uncle John succeeds in extricating himself from Will's arms, when they are near, or directly in front of door Up Left.*]

UNCLE JOHN [*panting*]: Excuse me! There are too many bees buzzing in this hive. I shall leave at once. [Exit hurriedly, running across stage to door Down Right. The noise brings Stanford and Dalton to door Center Back; Bridget to door Up R.]

STANFORD [*angrily*]: What's all this row, anyway?

WILL: I didn't like to see you lose that twenty thousand, Jack, so I told your Uncle that I was your wife.

STANFORD [*angrily*]: My heavens! What sort of a wife do you want him to think I have?

BRIDGET: F'r the love av Moike. I towld the owld gintleman thot I was your wife. [Stanford falls in chair in despair. Will stands on left of chair; Dalton sits on right arm of chair.]

DALTON: And, of course, he thinks I am your wife.

STANFORD [*tragically*]: Everything is ruined! Wife gone,—money gone—

BRIDGET: I am sorry, Misther Jack. Me intintions was good.

DALTON AND WILL [*together*]: So were mine.

STANFORD [*sighing resignedly*]: That's all right. Hell's paved with 'em.

BRIDGET: An' bedad, ut looks as if your friends had took the conthtract f'r the whole job! [All laugh. Enter Honey Bea and Uncle John.]

HONEY BEA [*scornfully*]: So these are your other Honey Beas!

STANFORD [*trying to spring from his chair, but held in place by Will and Dalton*]: Honey Bea!

HONEY BEA [*recognizing Will*]: For goodness' sake, Will! What are you doing dressed up like that?

WILL: Playing the part of a Honey-Bea, dear Cousin. [*Pulls off his wig and grins at Uncle John.*]

UNCLE JOHN: Bless my soul!

HONEY BEA [*confused,—to Dalton*]: And you—are you a Honey Bea, also?

DALTON: Only a drone in masquerade, trying to save that twenty thousand. [*Takes off wig and bows to Honey Bea.*]

HONEY BEA [*appealingly*]: Jack, can you ever forgive me?

STANFORD: Can I? [*Embracing her.*] I'll say I can!

BRIDGET: An' I turned mesilf into a Honey-Bea to save thim two prisints fer mesilf, an' the twenty thousan' fer two young idjits thot cilibrated their first anniversary by havin' their first quarrel.

HONEY BEA [*smiling happily*]: You're wrong, Bridget; there was just one idiot, and that was I.

BRIDGET [*Going toward door Up L.*]: Yez naden't worrit none, me dear; av all the idjits was took out of this wurruld, there'd be mighty few wimmen lift,—an' no min! [*Exit door Up Left.*]

UNCLE JOHN [*laughing immoderately*]: Bless my soul. God bless my soul! So that was it! Well, well, well! Ha! ha! ha!

STANFORD [*surprised*]: What's the matter, Uncle John?

UNCLE JOHN [*laughing*]: Ha! ha! I didn't stipulate you two were not to quarrel. I don't expect the impossible. What I said was: "If your anniversary leaves you as happy as your wedding day found you." Now, does it?

HONEY BEA: O Uncle, yes!

STANFORD: By George, happier!

BRIDGET [*poking head through doorway Up Left.*] Dinner is served.

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